

When both the Nuptial Mass and Blessing are prohibited, they may be transferred to a convenient day, not impeded, after the marriage.

Banns. The banns of marriage may be proclaimed beforehand at Mass, or at other services which are well attended, on three successive Sundays or on a holy day of obligation, should it occur (or the Ordinary may, instead, allow a notice to be hung in the porch for eight days, which must include two days of obligation). The form is given in the ritual.⁸⁹ If the persons live in different places the banns may be announced in both. Where particular law does not require banns, the provisions established for pre-nuptial enquiries are carefully to be observed. Marriage should take place in the parish church; in other churches or oratories (public or semi-public) only by leave of the Ordinary of the place or of the parish priest. The Ordinary may allow it to be celebrated in a private chapel or house only in an extraordinary case and always for a just and reasonable cause. Marriages may be allowed by the Ordinary in the churches or oratories attached to seminaries or convents only in case of necessity and with due precautions.

Form of Marriage. Besides the priest two witnesses must be present. In England we must also obey the law of the land which requires the presence of the government official (registrar) and the declarations made afterwards before him and two witnesses.⁹⁰ Sometimes the registrar is present in the church during the ecclesiastical function, sometimes he waits in the sacristy. The witnesses of both declarations, those made in the church during the marriage, and those made before the registrar, should be the same persons. The priest who marries the people must be the same who presides at the civil declarations afterwards.

Rite of Marriage. The essential rite is the same in all cases: The priest wears surplice and white stole.⁹¹ If he is to celebrate Mass *immediately* afterwards, he should wear the vestments, except the maniple. There should be a server in surplice who carries the lustral water. On the credence, or on a small table near the entrance to the sanctuary, a salver or plate is laid, on which the ring (with the gold and silver) will be placed while it is blessed.

The priest stands with his back to the altar at the entrance of the sanctuary or choir. The man and woman to be married kneel⁹² (outside the sanctuary)⁹³ before him, the man at the woman's right. The witnesses

⁸⁹ R.R., VIII, i, 8; *Ordo Adm.*, p. 197.

⁹⁰ By order of the bishops (in England) the religious ceremony must precede the civil one. In Ireland and in Australia there is only one ceremony, the religious one, as the priest acts as registrar for the State.

⁹¹ Whilst use of the cope for marriage ceremonies outside of Mass is strictly a pontifical privilege, it is permitted in the U.S.A. (cf. the Appendix) and customary in others.

⁹² So a new rubric of R.R. of 1925.

⁹³ A number of rubricians, while teaching that the correct thing is that lay persons should not enter the sanctuary during any liturgical function (except when this is permitted,

stand behind, or on either side. The priest first asks the question of the man: *N., wilt thou take N.,*⁹⁴ *here present, etc.,* as in the ritual. The man answers *I will.* The priest asks the question of the woman, and she answers. The man and woman then join right hands.⁹⁵ If the woman is a widow she wears a glove on her right hand, otherwise not. The man first says the form, *I, N., take thee, N., to my wedded wife, etc.,* repeating it in short phrases after the priest.⁹⁶ He then releases her hand. She takes his hand in her right and makes the declaration in the form appointed for her. They then join their hands while the priest makes the sign of the cross over them, saying *Ego coniungo vos in matrimonium, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.* He then sprinkles them thrice with lustral water (in front, to his left and to his right).

The husband or best man puts the ring, a piece of gold and a piece of silver⁹⁷ on the salver or plate held by the server. The priest blesses the ring with the form in the ritual⁹⁸ and sprinkles it once with lustral water. The husband takes the ring from the priest, gives the gold and silver to the bride (who puts them away or gives them to someone to hold for her) and says, in short phrases after the priest, *With this ring I thee wed, etc.*⁹⁹ Then the husband puts the ring on the woman's left hand. He puts it first on the thumb, saying *In the name of the Father,* takes it off and puts it on the forefinger, saying *and of the Son,* takes it off again and puts it on the second finger, saying *and of the Holy Ghost,* putting it on the third *Amen,* and leaves it there. If the woman places a ring on her husband's hand she does so at this point in the same way.

temporarily, by the rubrics) allow the parties to do so for the few moments of the actual marriage, where this is a long-established usage. Scarcely any of them, however, will permit the parties to be placed within the sanctuary for Mass, if it follows the marriage. They should remain *outside the chancel*, but may have special places, e.g., prie-dieux (undraped), just outside the altar rails.

⁹⁴ The Roman Ritual by the single letter *N.* seems to indicate that only the Christian name is used. It is, however, permissible to use both the Christian name and surname and this is the practice in many places.

⁹⁵ In some places the person who "gives the bride away" places her right hand in her husband's at this moment. The rubric of the English ritual speaks of the "giving away." In some places it is also customary that the priest circles their joined hands with the ends of his stole whilst they pronounce the form.

⁹⁶ In this formula the words "if holy Church will it permit" have been withdrawn in England, and in Ireland in its new ritual (1960).

⁹⁷ Generally gold and silver coins, but other objects (e.g., a cross or medal) may be used.

⁹⁸ The ritual assumes only a single ring but many priests are happy to bless two. The pluralised form is: *Benedic, Domine anulos hos, quos nos in tuo nomine benedicimus: ut, qui eos gestaverint, fidelitatem integram suis sponsis tenentes, in pace et voluntate tua permaneant, atque in mutuâ caritate semper vivant. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.*

⁹⁹ In Ireland the words "with my body I thee worship" are omitted.

The priest says the versicles *Confirma hoc Deus*, etc., and the prayer, the server (or if present, a choir,) answering.¹⁰⁰ That ends the essential rite.

Civil Declaration. Usually the priest, husband, and wife, with the witnesses, now (or after Mass) go to the sacristy, to make (in England) the civil declarations. The priest takes off the stole. Before the registrar they each make two declarations, repeating the words in short clauses after the priest. First the man says:

*I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, N.N., may not be joined in matrimony to N.N.*¹⁰¹

The woman makes the same statement, in the same way.

Then the man says: *I call upon these persons, here present, to witness that I, N.N., do take thee, N.N., to be my lawful wedded wife.* The woman says the same, changing the word *wife* to *husband*. The book kept by the registrar is then filled up and signed by the priest among others.

For a mixed marriage all sacred rites are forbidden and the marriage must take place outside the church, unless the Ordinary permit it to be held therein.¹⁰² The Ordinary may also allow some of the usual ecclesiastical ceremonies, but never Mass.¹⁰³ Even a private Mass (not the Nuptial one) is forbidden if in the circumstances it could be regarded as part of the marriage service.¹⁰⁴ As the essential rite of marriage requires only the expression of consent in the presence of proper witnesses, the civil ceremony (which is conducted by the priest), would suffice at a mixed marriage.¹⁰⁵

Nuptial Mass. If Nuptial Mass is to follow, the priest puts on the maniple and Mass begins. The newly-married kneel close to the altar, but outside the sanctuary.¹⁰⁶

The Nuptial Mass is the votive Mass *Pro sponsis* in the missal. It is a votive Mass of the second class and so it is celebrated with *Gloria*, no *Credo*, one commemoration at most, no *oratio imperata*, the seasonal or common preface. If the Mass is sung the solemn tone is used for the prayers, preface and *Pater noster*. The vestments are white.

The rubrics of the missal suppose that the husband and wife make their communion at this Mass.¹⁰⁷ It is celebrated as usual, with two

¹⁰⁰ When more than one pair are married at the same time, having first received the consent of each pair and duly celebrated their union, and having said to each pair *Ego conjungo vos*, etc., the priest blesses the rings and carries out the other blessings once for all in the plural.

¹⁰¹ Christian names and surnames (the wife's maiden name).

¹⁰² R.R., VIII, i, 20.

¹⁰³ C.I.C. 1102, § 2. The 1983 C.I.C. does not include this prohibition.

¹⁰⁴ Commission for Interpretation of the Code, 10 November 1925.

¹⁰⁵ In Ireland *Collectio Rituum* provides a form for a mixed marriage. It is much more brief than the ordinary rite.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. C.E., I, xiii, 13; S.R.C. 157, 175, 1258 § 2, 1288, etc. The best plan is to arrange a kneeling bench or prie-dieux for them just outside the altar rails. If they cannot kneel near the sanctuary during Mass they should come forward and kneel at the altar rails for the prayers of the blessing.

exceptions. After the *Pater noster*, before the prayer *Libera nos*, the priest genuflects, goes to the epistle corner and turns to the husband and wife, who remain kneeling. The server holds a missal (or other book containing the form of blessing) before the priest. With joined hands he says the two prayers *Propitiare Domine* and *Deus, qui potestate virtutis tuæ*, as in the missal. He returns to the centre of the altar, genuflects and goes on with Mass. The server puts the book back on its stand (or on the credence). Again after *Ite, missa est* the priest turns, this time at the middle of the altar. The husband and wife remain kneeling and the priest says the prayer *Deus Abraham* in the missal. The server again holds the book before him. The server puts back the book and brings the lustral water. The priest now addresses the husband and wife on the duties of married life.¹⁰⁸ Then he sprinkles them with lustral water (thrice, i.e., in the centre, to his left and to his right), turns to the altar and ends Mass as usual. The Leonine prayers may be omitted after this Mass.¹⁰⁹

Blessing Outside Mass. In England by special indult of the Holy See, (or by centenary custom)¹¹⁰ if both husband and wife are Catholics, if it is a day on which the Nuptial Blessing is allowed but Mass is not celebrated, the other form of blessing in the English ritual may be used. It consists of the psalm *Beatus quicumque*; *Kyrie, eleison*, etc., *Pater noster*, *Domine, exaudi orationem meam*, etc., and two prayers.¹¹¹ This form may be used before the civil declarations are made in the sacristy.

Again, in England by special indult, if the woman is a widow who had already received the Nuptial Blessing, or if the marriage takes place within the forbidden times and the Ordinary does not give permission for the Nuptial Blessing, a special form of prayer for the wedded pair may be used.¹¹²

The rector of the church or whoever takes his place (even though the parties were married in presence of another priest) must at once enter the marriage in the register, and add a note about it to the entry of baptism of each person in the baptismal register; or, if they were not baptised in his church, he must send a statement to the rector of the church where they were baptised, that he may make this entry.¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ It is a praiseworthy practice to place on the paten, with the bread for Mass, two small breads to be consecrated for their communion.

¹⁰⁸ The rubric at the end of this Mass in the missal says he should do so. The English ritual supposes that an instruction on marriage is given before the ceremony and *Excerpta* gives a specimen (p. 88).

¹⁰⁹ The blessing may be given to more than one pair at the same time. In that case no change—it would seem—is to be made in the prayers (S.R.C. 3 March 1936). Some rubricians, however, think the prayer *Deus, qui potestate* is to be said in the plural.

¹¹⁰ Cf. *Clergy Review*, May 1942, p. 228 (Mahoney, *Questions and Answers* I, Q. 322).

¹¹¹ R.R., VIII, iii; *Ordo Adm.*, Tit. VII, cap. ii, pp. 204-206; *Excerpta*, p. 92.

¹¹² R.R., VIII, iv; *Ordo Adm.*, Tit. VII, cap. ii, pp. 207-208; *Excerpta*, p. 94.

¹¹³ R.R., VIII, ii, 7.

Blessing for a silver or golden wedding anniversary. The Roman Ritual of 1952 gives (Appendix, Pars II, p. 15*)¹¹⁴ a special form of blessing for married people on the twenty-fifth or fiftieth anniversary of their wedding. The priest, vested for Mass, gives a short address to the happy couple. He then celebrates Mass for them. This Mass may be the votive Mass of the Most Holy Trinity or of our Lady. It may not, however, be the Nuptial Mass, but it has the same liturgical privileges¹¹⁵ as this Mass, being a votive Mass of the second class. The prayer of thanksgiving¹¹⁶ is added to that of the votive Mass under one conclusion.¹¹⁷ After the last Gospel the priest removes his maniple, and, turning towards the married couple, gives them the blessing as set forth in the ritual. Before the final form of blessing (*Benedictio*) he sprinkles the couple with lustral water. If a votive Mass be impeded by the Office of the day, the prayer of thanksgiving is added, under one conclusion, to the Mass of the day.¹¹⁸

§ 16. Marriage Blessed by a Bishop

Preparations. *At the high altar:* the frontal and conopæum are white; of the colour of the Mass, if this follows the marriage and is the Mass of the day, and not the Nuptial Mass. On the altar are laid the vestments for the bishop: amice, alb, cincture, white stole and cope (with the precious morse, if the bishop is the Ordinary). These are covered with a white veil. The golden mitre is also on the altar, and nearby the crosier (if the bishop is the Ordinary). Six or four candles are lit.

On the credence: the aspersory, a small salver, the book (*Ordo Administrandi* or *Excerpta*),¹¹⁹ the hand-candlestick with a wax candle, and a card with the names of the parties to be married. If Mass is to follow, the requisites for a bishop's Mass¹²⁰—including the maniple and the pontifical canon, the ewer and basin (*bacile*) with hand-towels, a book for the Nuptial Blessing,¹²¹ and the pax-brede (with a towel to wipe it after

¹¹⁴ In the 1953 edition of the Roman Ritual, the blessing is incorporated into the body of the ritual, as Chapter vii of Title VIII ; *Excerpta*, p. 100. A rubric concerning a votive Mass (no.12) is given in the 1962 missal.

¹¹⁵ See "Nuptial Mass" above.

¹¹⁶ This prayer is in the missal at the end of the votive Masses, and immediately preceding *Orationes Diversæ*.

¹¹⁷ The two prayers are regarded as one in enumerating the prayers.

¹¹⁸ Ditto.

¹¹⁹ The outlines of the marriage rite are in the *Pontificale* (Appendix) and are slightly different from those in the Roman Ritual but in England or Ireland the local ritual is needed to give the English formulæ and the local additional rites.

¹²⁰ On the paten two small breads (or more, if the witnesses and others are to communicate—in which case a ciborium may be preferable) for the communion of the parties.

¹²¹ Given also in missal and *Pontificale*.